

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 005827

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS USTR  
DEPT FOR EUR/SE, EUR/ERA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2009

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [TU](#) [CY](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY EXTENDS CUSTOMS UNION TO CYPRUS

REF: ANKARA 5816

Classified By: (U) Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission Robert Deutsch  
for reasons 1.4 b, d.

11. (U) On October 2, several days before issuance of the European Commission's report on Turkish progress toward accession, the Turkish MFA announced that all new EU members, including the Republic of Cyprus, would be included within the scope of the Turkey-EU Customs Union. The announcement followed GOT Cabinet approval of an amendment to the customs union agreement to include all new EU member states. This amendment supersedes a May 7, 2004 Cabinet decision which extended the customs union to the other nine new members and which excluded the Republic of Cyprus. The MFA announcement (reftel) underscores that this step does not imply recognition of the Republic of Cyprus or a change in its relationship with the Turkish Cypriot administration in northern Cyprus.

12. (C) In subsequent conversations with us, European diplomats, including the EU President Dutch DCM, averred that the EU will not require Turkey to take any further steps with respect to Cyprus prior to the EU Summit in December. MFA Cyprus Department Head Bilman told us that Turkey does not contemplate further measures, such as maritime and aviation links, arguing that these areas are outside the scope of the Customs Union. He also noted the lack of concrete progress in easing the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. Nor, he added, will Turkey sign a protocol on the matter with the ROC: making the extension operational is an internal Turkish matter, he argued, and Turkey had signed no such protocol with any other new EU member.

13. (C) When we spoke to him on October 4, Bilman worried that extending the Customs Union would draw criticism from the nationalistic elements in Turkey, including the opposition Republican Peoples, Party (CHP) and the military. CHP Member of Parliament and Vice Chair for International Relations Oymen claimed to us on October 8 that the CHP understood Customs Union extension was "unavoidable" if Turkey wanted to get a date in December, and that the CHP would not criticize it. On October 13, Bilman said the MFA had not yet received the criticism he feared.

14. (C) Cemalettin Damlaci, Director General for EU Affairs at the Foreign Trade Undersecretariat, told Econoff and Econ Specialist on October 8 that the GOT's October 2 announcement has not actually been implemented. Implementing regulations must be issued for the Customs and Foreign Trade Undersecretariats. Asked about the timing of these regulations, Damlaci implied that the Greek Cypriots would need to show a "positive approach" before Turkey finalized these measures. Conversely, Customs Director General for EU Affairs Sabahattin Kocas told Econ Specialist on October 13 that he expected the Prime Ministry to approve the implementing regulation for the Customs Undersecretariat soon.  
EDELMAN